

# MONTANA AMERICAN INDIAN CAUCUS

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### SENATE MEMBERS:

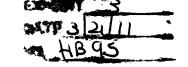
Shannon Augare Sharon Stewart-Peregoy Jonathan Windy Boy

#### House Members:

Tony Belcourt Lila Evans Carolyn Pease-Lopez Sterling Small Frank Smith

## CAUCUS STAFF:

LUKE WALAWANDER



March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011

The Honorable Terry Murphy, Chair, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Sen. Shannon Augare

Sen. Rowlie Hutton

Sen. Jim Peterson

Sen. Anders Blewett

Sen. Larry Jent Sen. Cliff Larsen Sen. Jim Shockley

Sen. Jeff Essman Sen. Greg Hinkle

Sen. Lynda Moss

Sen. Chas Vincent

# Dear Chairman Murphy:

The Montana American Indian Caucus expresses its strong support for HB 95, which would generally revise the human rights law to include the authorization of Indian employment preference on or near reservations.

As it stands in Montana, firms who wish to do business with tribal governments comply with federal law when recognizing TERO (Tribal Employments Rights Office) regulations, but there is an inconsistency with Montana state law. Private enterprise is halted when the rule of law does not establish steady, consistent, and reliable legal ground upon which to build business.

HB 95 addresses this issue, clarifying Indian preference for tribes and private enterprise, so that business development can happen free of jurisdictional inconsistencies and within the scope of both state and federal statue.

This inclusion of Indian employment preference will surely help generate tribal economic development and private enterprise opportunities for our tribal members, both on and near reservations.

Furthermore, the Montana American Indian Caucus supports the overall intent of HB 95, as it demonstrates clear support for anti-discrimination practices in the areas of employment and housing.

The Montana American Indian Caucus strongly urges support, and to pass, HB 95.

With Sincere Support, we are